

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-18 (Cancelled)

Claim 19 (Original): A context generator generating context information for use in image processing, comprising:

a reference pixel position and context simplification memory storing first information specifying positions of reference pixels, and second information specifying rules for

converting discrete context information to simplified context information;

a reference pixel generator coupled to said reference pixel position and context simplification memory, generating said discrete context information by obtaining values of the reference pixels in the positions specified by said first information; and

a context converter coupled to said reference pixel generator, converting said discrete context information to said simplified context information according to said second information, said simplified context information having fewer states than said discrete context information.

Claim 20 (Original): A shape information order comprising the context generator of claim 19.

Claim 21 (Original): A shape information decoder comprising the context generator of claim 19.